

The Third Book  
of the Poet's Club



Christmas 1913



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LOS ANGELES

To the doctor-man

my friend fellow-poet

Humbly hoping he may like

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J. P.

1913

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THE THIRD BOOK OF THE  
POETS' CLUB.

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### EVENING

BEYOND all poesy, sublimity of song,  
Sweet eventide, when mellow shadows  
throng  
The valleys, and the slow, reluctant day,  
On purple sandals gliding, steals away  
Into the gloaming, by the sleeping streams,  
A pensive spirit passing unto dreams.  
It is the hour when woods enchanted glow  
And gentle winds with dying odours blow,  
From tree to tree faint pipes of evening call,  
The bat sweeps circling by the ivied wall,  
A lark drops fluttering to his lowly nest,  
And drowsily the ring-dove croons of rest.  
The moan of kine has ceased, the drone of bees,  
But ever a little stream among the trees  
Speeds lightly on, and singeth as it goes,  
Songs that a child at evening might compose.  
Now the sun's flight is finished in the West  
Where far the great clouds veil his flaming crest,

The shepherd pens his weary flock away,  
Safe folding laggard little ones that stray,  
Bidding them browse awhile ere darkness steep  
All things that move, in deep, embrownéd sleep.  
High uplands as at early morning shine,  
Sacred the light that gilds the day's decline,  
As when the dawn with holy eyes appears  
And opening blossoms sparkle with her tears,  
For gross, forboding day, which climbs the East,  
Calling the world to work, and fight, and feast;  
The cunning day, the fierce, insistent hours  
Of human strife with Nature's dreadful powers,  
The groaning of a being chained to earth,  
Although ablaze with vision from his birth.  
But come, the evening calls us, let us go,  
We must not sorrow because earth hath woe,  
A passion lingers in this serene air,  
A passion void of triumph or despair,  
Empty of storm, and hushed to calm delight  
We turn our eyes to greet the coming night,  
The stars are streaming up the boundless hills,  
The stars which smile at men's inconstant wills,  
And in an opal radiance, crescent-wise,  
The moon peers coldly from the limpid skies.

HENRY SIMPSON.

The Club Gold Medal for 1912 was  
awarded to Mr. Simpson for this poem.  
The judge was SIR H. B. TREE.



## VAE VICTIS

WITH hail vociferous dense crowds acclaim  
The victor, whose strength doubles as  
his trail  
Enkindled rings from shouts that crown his name  
With hail.

But those who straining hard as he, yet fail  
Because the stone he missed made their feet  
lame,  
Who choked with his speed's dust gasp breathless,  
pale.

But set their teeth and struggle on the same,  
Who face defeat's dead eyes, nor shrink, nor  
quail,  
None will save those from bitterness of shame  
With hail.

ALEXANDRA VON HERDER.

## A WOMAN

YOU have bruised my soul and my body,  
You have destroyed all my dreams,  
You have given me tears when I yearned wildly  
for laughter and gladness,  
Yet always you must I love,  
For I am a woman.

I know your baseness, your folly,  
I know you through and through,  
I am kissed by eager lips, of love a new voice  
whispers,  
Yet always you must I want,  
Unfaithfully faithful !

I want your devil's mouth,  
Your rough arms around me,  
Something you gave me which only once to a  
woman is given—  
Something fiercely divine—  
A part of her being.

I am kissed, the new voice says,  
"That man was a demon."  
I smile and am silent, I will be kind to this  
stranger who loves me.  
Why need he ever know  
That you only I long for?

We shall be happy together,  
He is rich, he adores me.  
Why need he ever know that he is not my soul's  
true idol  
That when I have kissed the Saint  
I shall dream of the "Demon"?

Mine is the curse of woman  
From time primeval,  
All that she has she gives to one man and when  
he has slain her  
She does not forgive nor forget,  
Yet always she loves.

RATHMELL WILSON.

## THE OCTOPUS

LIKE a great octopus  
With outspread tentacles  
The City lies, before me and behind,  
A vast, malignant thing,  
Groping and blind.

Entangled, struggling, fallen,  
Vainly resisting—on the monster's heart  
Quiet at last I lie,  
And watch my life depart,  
My spirit die.

E. HAMILTON MOORE.

## THE SCULPTOR TO HIS MASTERPIECE

**T**HOU art an image made by me of stone,  
From my most noble aspirations formed,  
When cold the hand that built thee limb on limb,  
Still wilt thou gaze in scorn upon the World.  
Thou art the child of all my loftiest aims,  
And when th' enshrouding marble fell away,  
Thou wert embodied there, my Youth's white  
dream,  
Still art thou young, and I draw near the grave,  
And when I die, I fain would pass my soul  
Into thy laughing eyes, and make them weep,  
Oh, thy long years to come ! How can I die  
And know thee in thy beauty mocking death !

JOAN YAMWORTH.

## HIRAETH

**B**Y Kenfig Pool the curlew cries,  
A waste of brown the bracken lies—  
My soul in this black city dies ;  
On Kenfig Pool the curlew cries.

The sands of Sker lie shining there ;  
The murmuring sea fills all the air ;  
The wings of peace are everywhere ;  
The lone Sker sands lie shining there.

Far, far, the hills stand purple-hazed,  
Dim dreams to waking being raised,  
Sweet dreams on which my young eyes gazed ;  
The far, faint hills stand purple-hazed.

Soft land of mine, I love you so,  
Your wistful joy, your lovely woe ;  
Ah, far away, and long ago!  
Lost land of mine, I love you so.

E. CRAWSHAY WILLIAMS.

### THE WORSHIPPER

UPON the moorland, where the great white  
stones

With lowering silence endless vigil keep,  
I learnt the nameless secret of the ages  
And felt the shadow and the joy of Sin.  
So dark the night, so terrible the stillness,  
My very breath seemed thundering forth from me,  
As by the rocks I saw that which one sees not,  
With human eyes, and lives again to see—  
The Marriage 'neath the Shade, that olive groves  
saw

When Rome was young and Pan o'er all held  
sway.

The speechless horror of those mysteries  
Weighed on my soul and left me shuddering,  
A shell all riven with gross loathsomeness,  
Bestial, yet seared with immortality.

Never was joy akin to that I felt  
When mine eyes saw the gleaming evil Wonder,  
Never was shame so emptied of desire  
As when I woke to find the gray dawn near.  
How can I live, how walk the paths of men,  
I who have drunk the age-old wine of fauns?  
Nay, I will take me back to my companions,  
Back to the gray hills that are calling me,  
Once more the deadliest Sin to consummate  
And whirl and sink in white all-flaming hell!

ELLA ERSKINE.

## THE THIEF ON THE CROSS

### I

AH! dear Lord Jesu, as we hang,  
I on my cross, and thou on thine,  
Thou, through one glad, redeeming pang  
Enterest Heaven's gate; but what of mine?  
Are my sins purged? It may be so;  
But do we know? Ah! do we know?

### II

Thou sufferest for the sins of men,  
I for mine own; yet sins as black  
Rest unavenged. Have mercy, then  
On me, whom equal torments rack,  
Yet no redemption bring for me;  
Nor for the world bring I like thee.

III

Once I was innocent as thou,  
 And, looking back upon the way  
 I trod, I cannot tell thee how  
 I came to where I hang to-day.  
 My birthright was a blighting curse  
 Bad I began and came to worse.

IV

Yet, looking now upon thy face,  
 Dim longings, hopes, come back to me  
 Remorseful thoughts, moments of grace,  
 Wherein I strove my soul to free  
 From the strong fetters linked by Fate.  
 Christ ! have I seen thy face too late ?

V

Ah ! what strange pang disfeatures thee ?  
 What means this cry : " My God, my God !  
 Wherefore hast *Thou* forsaken me ? "  
 Art thou too from God's grace outlawed ?  
 Then : " It is finished." In that last sigh,  
 Proclaim'st thou failure, or Victory ?

JOHN TODHUNTER.

## TO A REJECTED MANUSCRIPT

SO thou art back—returned without a sign  
To indicate the cause of thy rejection,  
Or hint at emendation or correction  
In form or feature, stanza, verse or line !  
Thus to oblivion they would thee consign  
For doubtful fault or fancied imperfection:  
But hither thou hast turned to claim protection,  
And here, unblushing, do I own thee mine.

What did they say of thee ? In vain I try  
To penetrate thy silence, and to find  
Some blemish their award to justify.  
And so I sit, perplexed and unresigned,  
Scanning thee fondly with a parent's eye—  
A parent to an offspring's failings blind.

WILLIAM BLANE.



## THE ABANDONED MONASTERY

ON

L'ANNONCIADE, LES ALPES-MARITIMES

A PLACE of beauty, and a place of peace,  
Like some deserted citadel it stands,  
Where cypress sentries pine without surcease  
For sound of steps, and touch of human  
hands.

A stony path whereup the fathers went  
Has fifteen niches which are eloquent  
Of mysteries of the Rosary, and suffering Christ.

The bell that told the hour of Angelus  
To peasants toiling on the mountain side,  
Hangs in its lonely arch, all ruinous,  
Like something sad, and wrapped in holy  
pride.

Ah! nevermore shall peasants cease from toil—  
Forget a little while the well cared soil  
When heard its blessèd summons on the breeze-  
less air.

R. HENDERSON BLAND.

## SCHERZO

**H**URRY out !  
There's a little brown feather at play on  
the wold,  
There's a fairy pursued by a sunbeam of gold,  
There's a breath that is warm, and a breeze  
that is cold,  
Hurry out !

Hurry down !  
The wind is awake and the leaves are at rout,  
The little brown feather is flying about,  
He'll be over the hills if you don't hurry out !  
Hurry down !

Growing old ?  
Come out from your hiding and banish your  
frown,  
And help me in chasing that feather of brown,  
He'll be off and away if you don't hurry down,  
Growing old !

Hurry out !  
The sunbeams are drowned in an ocean of gold,  
The little brown feather's away o'er the wold,  
But we'll catch him ere night if we're nimble  
and bold,  
Hurry out !

CONSTANCE MORGAN.

## THE DISCIPLE OF VENUS

WHAT is the art that out of chaos blends  
the form of harmony, and doubt dispels  
when fluttering life its weakening influence ends ?

Life once so dear and held through all illusion  
still cherishing an image from afar  
which now recedes in nebulous seclusion  
to yield the way for yet another star  
in the wide firmament of heaven. . . .  
How shall I know that this is fate's own hand  
to give me what my anxious being craves,  
Maybe some devil's trick upon the sand  
of life, to cast me on the waves  
of false enjoyment, once again to be engulfed. . .  
And yet when mystery is cleared away  
and starkest truth stands face to face with truth  
There rings a note as heralding the day  
of life again, this time a life in sooth  
which grips and carries beyond every pain. . . .

This art is love, which out of chaos blends  
the form of harmony, and wonders tells  
to mould our listening natures to its ends !

OSCAR FÜRST

## UPON A SPINSTER

NEATNESS was ever in thy bones  
That now most neatly lie  
In Death's embrace who was thine only lover.  
And thy prim lips  
That smiled so grudgingly  
Are stretched in a new ecstasy  
At his chill kiss. Death is thy lover.

C. M. KOHAN.

## MARY OF MAGDALA

MARY of Magdala came to bed ;  
There were no soft curtains round her  
head.

She had no mother to hold of worth  
The little baby she brought to birth.

Mary of Magdala groaned and prayed,  
"Oh God I am very much afraid ;  
For out of my body, by sin defiled,  
Thou biddest me make a little child.

"Oh God I have turned my face from Thee  
To that which the Angels may not see ;  
How can I make from my deep disgrace,  
A child whose angel shall see Thy face ?

"Oh God I have sinned and I know well  
That the pains I bear are the pains of hell ;  
But the thought of the child that sin has given  
Is like the thought of the airs of Heaven."

Mary of Magdala held her breath  
In the clutch of pain like the pains of Death,  
And through her heart like the mortal knife  
Went the pang of joy and the pang of life.

"Now we are two alone," said she,  
"And we are two, who should be three ;  
Now who will clothe my baby fair  
In the little garments that babies wear?"

There came two angels with quiet wings  
And hands that were full of baby things ;  
And the new-born child was bathed and dressed  
And laid again on his mother's breast.

"Now who will sign on his brow the mark  
To keep him safe from the Powers of Dark ?  
Who will my baby's sponsor be ?"  
"I, the Lord God, who died for thee."

"Now who will comfort him if he cry ;  
And who will suckle him by and bye ?  
For my hands are cold and my breasts are dry.  
And I think that my time has come to die."

"I will dandle thy Son as a Mother may ;  
And his lips shall lie where my own Son's lay.  
Come, dear little one, come to me ;  
The Mother of God shall suckle thee."

Mary of Magdala laughed and sighed,  
"I never deserved a child," she cried ;  
"Dear God, I am ready to go to hell,  
Since with my little one all is well."

Then the Son of Mary did o'er her lean,  
"Poor Mother, thy tears have washed thee clean.  
Thy last poor pains, they will soon be done  
And my Mother shall give thee back thy Son."

Frozen grass for a bearing bed,  
A halo of frost round a woman's head,  
And pious folks who looked and said,  
"A drab and her brat that are better dead."

E. NESBIT.

#### AN ENGLISH LANDSCAPE

A TWILIGHT thread of smoke,  
Upcurling dreamily  
From dappled cottage-stack,  
Caught in a sunset sky.

A little garden-plot,  
White, scarlet, gold and green,  
And gnarled apple-trees  
With orbs of rosy sheen.

A starling's wicker jail ;  
A keep of honey-bees ;  
A dome of winnowing wings  
And skylark melodies.

A group of ruddy kine,  
Knee-deep in shallow pool,  
Whereby twin alders stoop  
And spill their shadows cool.

A hallow'd heap of stones ;  
A tower, leaf-clad and square,  
And resonant with chimes  
That voice the hour of prayer.

A frown of night-dark woods,  
O'ermantling bleached brows  
Of hills brushed back from plains,  
Where sheep infolded drowse.

A ribbon road that pales  
In distance to a line ;  
A sinuous stream that crawls  
Its course in shade and shine.

A delicate vapor-veil  
Thrown o'er the Down's highways ;  
A gorge of sombre pines  
Wreath'd in a bluey haze.

Far plain and sky-line drown'd  
In visionary gleam,—  
And things the eye sees not,  
Thought mirrors in a dream.

England! thou'rt all aglow  
With glory, beauty, bliss !  
And laurelling thy brow  
Peace yields her unctuous kiss.

J. H. A. HICKS.

## THE PASSOVER

*They slew him not, neither crucified him, but he was represented by one in his likeness. [Koran, iv.] See also the Narrative of Joseph of Arimathea in the Apocryphal Gospels.*

### SARA

BLOOD in the air: and the people were running. The cry,  
"Sorceress! bind her, the sorceress!" sings in mine ears.  
I whom the Sanhedrin trusted. The scroll of the Law  
Lost on the eve of the sacrifice.—Dead Galilaean,  
Fainting I fall where the weight of thee heavily swings  
Over the crowd of thy courtiers, O mystical king.  
Shelter me now from the multitude. . . . Eli !  
Eli !  
Judas—not Jesus—is crucified. Ah, misery !  
Decked for the Passover festival.—False is the rood.

### THE VOICE

Kinswoman, daughter of Caiaphas, hearken.  
The Law  
Lies in the heart of the Lamb, and the Chosen has given  
Faith in a friendship.—The son of man dies, and the three  
Women are waiting. The fleshers are gone, and the reed



Dipt in the blood of the paschal.—The even is  
past.

SARA

Judas ?—The voice is thy Master's.—O  
Wound ! bitter-sweet  
Wound ! he is dead that is mine though my  
heart is athrill.  
Speak.—He is still,—and the life that was  
mingled with mine  
Mingles with thine.—O thou terrible thought of  
my dreams !  
Torn is the veil of the temple and darkened the  
sun.  
Nailed is the heart and the feet, and the lips  
kiss'd between  
Wide as a rift in the wave by a fleck o' the wind.  
Speak, Rabboni ; for the love in thy close  
comforting  
Faint as a tarnish of gold on the memory lies  
Over the night and the sea ; and the call of a  
child  
Echoes the name of Iscariot over the hills.

THE VOICE

Lo ! in the world I am with thee, a symbol and  
crown.  
Far in Immanuel's shadow is flying the dawn.  
Out of thy dreaming behold thy Perfection.—  
Arise :  
Say to the scribes that the scroll of the Truth is  
unfurled.

W. A. BERNHARD SMITH.

## HONOUR

NOR was I lonely in the thin starlight.  
A pin-spot of existence webbed in dreams,  
I heard the comely traffic of the night ;  
The night-life eddied softly in dark streams.

And bracken-sifted breezes at my feet  
Ran guttering like worn candles to the gloom ;  
My weaver lover should spin fine and neat  
The ragged thread of dreams on this night's  
loom.

Pine-pillared loomed the wood like a great crypt ;  
Wind-scourged whirled round the penitential  
mist ;  
From the High Altar of the heavens dipped  
The moon her fingers, beamed like amethyst.

I leaned on hope, and waited in the night.  
Proud-lipped and pale my lover, came he forth  
Girt with disastrous calm. A steady light  
Rayed from him. Like a god my man came  
forth.

And he stands high—is tall, my man, and fair.  
He set between us, underneath the stars,  
A sword of honour sharp and bitter-bare ;  
And we lay parted underneath the stars.

. . . . .

The dawn is cold,  
    . . . Let me shake off the dew  
The drenching vapours ; lift me ; let me stand  
And loose the fingers of the dreams I dreamed—  
Though I be naked to the morning light  
Stripped clean of happiness, of all save tears,  
Though I be here with lamp unlit, no flame  
To tend from him through me to future years,  
Though I, love's priestess be denied my vows,  
Be set in such a ridge as curds the blood,  
Let me run straight that path he set for me  
Let me go blindly lest I see the thorns,  
And hotly lest I feel them when I fall.  
So when this dawn wears to another night  
He may have back the body that he broke  
Wrapped round with honour for its shroud, and  
    take  
The worthless ashes : pour them from his hands  
Into the Stillness and the Dark again.

    . . . . .  
Then may I mount beyond desire ; and be  
As argon celibate, remote, austere ;  
Neon and krypton kindred souls with me ;  
Nor feel him in the void if he drift near.

MARION CRAN.

## WHEN WINTER REIGNS

WHEN Winter like an ashen pall  
Enshrouds the sullen stricken fields,  
And the shrill Wind, whose shrieks appal,  
Her stormy sceptre wields;

When all the sweet and bitterness  
That form the essence of the soul,  
Find firm revival in the stress  
That tries leaf, stem, and bole;

Be mine to be at one with her  
In all her gust, and squall, and flood,  
No fireside softness to deter  
And enervate the blood.

But battle fierce with subtle ills,  
Those evils, that disturbing ease,  
Assail our ever-wavering wills  
Like some accurst disease.

From many wanderings have I come  
To walk the village pathways o'er;  
Ah! many voices now are dumb  
And heed the world no more.

And as I struggle through the rain  
'Mong walks where I so oft have woo'd,  
Fond memory peoples once again  
The village solitude.

I mind me of the village lad  
Who bared his forehead to the thorn,  
Of how he went forth poorly clad  
And laughed the world to scorn.

And how, heart-high, he strode with ease  
    (A figure shadowy as a wraith)  
Through Life's grim gray realities  
    To test the strength of Faith.

And how he wandered through the storm  
    (Where struggling Genius oft has trod)  
Through those mysterious routes which form  
    The myriad roads to God;

Where Trouble, cheek by jowl with Care,  
    Stalked gauntly through the homes of men  
And led to fathomless despair  
    Too deep for mortal ken.

But finding in the darkest hour  
    Some purpose in Life's gloomier face,  
Some thought to sweeten by its power  
    The discipline of Race.

He learned the lesson of the Wind,  
    The stern grave tasks of Nature's book,  
Nor ever whiningly repined  
    By faltering act or look.

He sought nor wealth, high rank, nor fame  
    No lofty sphere in which to move,  
But somehow to his homely name  
    There came the wealth of Love.

He grasped the heart of Winter's lore,  
    Snatched this rare truth from out her mood :—  
The worthier Man becomes, the more  
    The grace of Womanhood.

ALFRED EDMONDS.

## CIRCE

I AM the sorceress of the meads,  
Pale ichor fills my viperish veins:  
Hast heard my voice amid the reeds,  
When moons die and the wind complains?  
Hast thou not spied me by the mere,  
Beyond the lush, sad forest lair?  
Art thou not stricken with mad fear  
Of my soft eyes and flamy hair?  
Thou canst not turn, thou canst not flee.  
Thou dost yearn my magian cup,  
And drain the draught from froth to lee,  
And drink the poisoned potion up.  
Till I shall see thy lithe straight limbs  
Turn gnarled and crooked from thy feast;  
Thy back contorts, thy bright orb dims.  
And fawning thou art grown a beast.  
To lie beside my even feet,  
Is not thy Circe pale and sweet?  
Has she not wooing hands that twine  
About thy gasping, shortened neck?  
Is not the sun god's daughter thine,  
And will she often stoop to deck  
Thy body with wild coronals?  
O, listen to her lovely lute,  
When twilight wanes and the world is mute.  
O, hearken how she lures and calls ! . . .  
Circe, in her wondrous fashion,  
With her body warm, Thalassian.  
With her bosom bathed in spices,  
How she murmurs and entices !

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

## THE LULLABY

WHAT says my spirit?  
With eyes of reverie my spirit whispers—  
Surely the cup of happiness was mine  
To quaff, and though the potent draught be  
drained,  
Its savour steeps my soul,  
Its perfume bathes my soul,  
In velvet waves of fragrance of delight.  
Serene I sit,  
Nor have I need to turn my conscious thoughts  
Unto my love,  
As languidly I muse on happiness,  
For in the brain's profound  
The essence of my love  
Throws circle after circle of wide joy,  
As though with pillowed head upon her bosom,  
I laid me down, a little whining beast,  
Whining for a caress,  
And she did mother me,  
And she did fondle me,  
With suave and delicate fingers through my  
hair,  
Thus sang my spirit  
Its lullaby of happiness.

HORACE B. SAMUEL.

## AN OLD FLAME

HOW still you lie and silent  
Whose low voice once thrilled in me,  
And the cold mouth I kissed  
How pale and drooped in misery.

You too have known a deeper, sweeter woe  
Than that we suffered.  
Yet would not I  
(For all my heart's wise mockery)  
Our lesser love forego.

I cannot weep, nor would I pity thee  
Who scorned my pity ever.  
But on thy grave  
My faded love lay reverently.

C. M. KOHAN.

## TO A FLORENTINE BUST

PERFECT, as 'twere through very lack of art,  
So seeming simple both in poise and line,  
Familiar to the sight as wild flower's heart,  
Yet rare as rose divine.

Thou, little witness to the grave old truth  
That Art is slow-evolving as the soil,  
And that thou shalt not carve immortal youth  
Save with immortal Toil ;



Thou, in this quiet hall, endur'st among  
The vext distinguished faces of the dead,  
Thy kinsmen, whom th' envemomed jewels stung  
Or poison-posset sped.

At sight of these whatever thoughts take shape  
Only sweet thoughts are ours who mark the low  
Curls on thy slim neck's inward-curving nape  
And thy young candid brow !

Outside, thy charm forgotten, at the gates  
Clamour the "Moderns," loud with maniac  
themes.  
Art is a thing outside of jostling hates,  
Uncandours, and sick dreams.

The Way of Desolation lies without,  
Soaked with salt tears, but thou, O deathless  
child,  
Unstirred by crooked thought or blatant shout,  
Remainest undefiled.

VICTOR PLARR.

## TWILIGHT

### I

GENTLY the twilight falls,  
With scarce a sound ;  
Only a wandering wind, through the hushed trees  
Breathes, and a sighing whisper from the ground  
Each quickened sense enthralls.  
Earth celebrates her nightly Mysteries.

### II

I am alone,  
Alone in Love's own hour,  
With Night and dreams. All things begin to  
dream ;  
The breathing woods as fragrant as a flower.  
Peace, like an undertone  
Unheard by day, to fill the world doth seem.

### III

A few bright stars  
Come twinkling in the sky,  
While darkness deepens, and grows infinite,  
And Earth and Silence, and the stars and I  
Dream on, familiars  
Of Heaven's vast house, entranced in one delight.  
It is the hour  
When blissful dreams have power.  
When love in twilight broods  
Over the heart, his world, and ecstasy  
Trembles through all the heart's deep solitudes.  
It is the Lover's hour,  
And, with all are dreaming things, I dream of thee.  
JOHN TODHUNTER.

## THE HAPPY VOICES

FAR away, the mirth of the Happy Voices  
Mocks me. From the glades of the isle  
enchanted

Trills a silver merriment and rejoices  
O'er the pain they jeered and the grief they  
taunted.

Evil their laughter!

\* \* \* \* \*

Long, I wandered, long in the magic garden.  
Ah the deadly, delicate beauty of it,  
Frail as crystal fronds on the pane that harden,  
Faint as music heard in the tones above it  
Following after!

There the poppy pales and the red rose blanches ;  
Dull the sward's sweep lies as a velvet faded.  
Day bleeds slow to death, though the twilight  
stanches

All her wounds with violet veils brocaded  
Shadow on shadow.

Brood, as oil-films float on the heaving billows,  
Calms that undulate but are never broken.  
Sunk, as tired limbs sink in a nest of pillows,  
Life lies prone and heavy as water-soaken  
Grass in a meadow.

Lapt in wistful dream, as a shade I drifted  
Through the gloaming lavender hued and scented.  
Ah, with lifted feet and with eyes unlifted  
Would my thought had swept through the cedar-  
tent

Maze when I met her!

Fate forbade me peace—and I looked, and loved  
her.

She?—I know not. Now that the spell has left  
me,

Clear I see my vision alone had moved her.

Hers she lent awhile; then of all bereft me.

Shall I regret her?

For my lyre she loved, not the hand that bore it.  
Loved the impassioned song, not the heart that  
pleaded.

Saw the singing robe, not the man who wore it.  
'Twas the thrill she craved; nor the price she  
heeded.

So it was fated.

Slight her loss whose love was a moon-ray shining  
Slant the prisms plume of the Queen of Fountains,  
Fitful, wan; whose passion was as the pining  
Wind awake with cold on the Frozen Mountains,  
Bitter, unmated.

Through my life it blew, and the tree was sapless:  
On my soul it breathed, and her stars were  
darkened.

Then she laughed—the glee of the Voices Hapless,  
Bleak, unhuman, pitiless, dead, I harkened.  
Horror fell o'er me.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sadder mirth than sorrow, pursue no longer,  
Até-like, my soul in the world-ways real.  
Haunt the happy. Humble the love that stronger  
Deems itself than death. For the lost ideal  
None shall restore me.

J. GURDON.

## THE CHILDREN OF KENSINGTON GARDENS

(TO MARION)

STRINGS of shells whose lovely convolutions  
Bathe in hues of rose, and pearl, and dawn,  
Doves grown radiant winged from soft ablutions  
In clear lakes on Eden's lawn,

Rainbows round the golden head of morning,  
Locks flung backward from an angel's brow  
Ere great Eve had disobeyed his warning,—  
Such these Innocents of now.

Eve's poor sons in endless times and nations  
Ate the bitter fruit of strife and doubt:  
Still the turmoil of Man's generations  
Brings Youth's miracle about.

Here in London, in this old King's pleasure,  
Where each budding tulip was his child,  
And he mourned his Mary, a bowed presence,  
To his worst foes reconciled;

Here where the Child Queen, through th' alleys  
shady,  
In her small coach wending to and fro,  
Took the homage of some slim kind lady—  
Your grandmother? . . . years ago;

Here, in these old Gardens, where we others  
Still go hurrying up the long Broad Walk,  
Money-delving sires and modish mothers,  
With our half-sad, rapid talk,

You, the children, keep an old behaviour,  
And together daily undefiled  
Build the Lodge of the World's Little Saviour,  
Found the Kingdom of the Child.

Yours no cavil, best of politicians!  
Yours no race for honours, lucre, fame:  
Battledores beat down our proud positions,  
And the hoop rolls Care to shame.

Gold is never known in your communion,  
Save the honest gold of curling hair;  
Blood and war, spent loves, and friends' disunion  
Find no present lodging there!

Oh, the world of cream and peach-bloom faces,  
Candid eyes and tresses spun of gold,  
The Republic of the Lamb that graces  
Our grim London, grown so old!

When my hour is marked upon the dial,  
May I dream of you again at last—  
View your sweet eyes in my hour of trial,  
Hold one dear hand ere I, too, be past!

VICTOR PLARR.

## PAGAN DAYS

WE drank in far off Pagan Days  
The red Falernian wine,  
While rival poets, crowned with bays,  
In Vergil's measures sang their lays,  
Beneath some roof of vine.  
We piled the blazing logs at night,  
And told old tales of love and fight.

We met the band of nymphs who sought  
For Pan in merry throng,  
And by his reed pipes sleeping caught  
And bound him, laughing, till he bought  
His freedom with a song.  
To river gods we paid our vows,  
And underneath a dome of boughs

Where in green gloom of forest shade  
An ancient altar stood,  
Our votive offerings we laid.  
We knew each secret sacred glade  
Of dryad haunted wood,  
Where roamed the faun with feet of kid,  
Or maenad danced, and bassarid.

In Rome your slaves did wait your call  
To bear you in your chair  
To feast in some high frescoed hall  
—The fair-haired slaves from Further Gaul,  
The Greek who decked your hair,  
Who combed it out for my delight  
And bound it in a fillet bright.

Our house held many a goodly thing  
The keen Phœnician  
Had sailed the distant seas to bring  
From land of some dark Indian king  
Where yellow Oxus ran,  
Gold fabrics, dyes of Tyrian blue;  
The gracious Grecian vases too

Told many an ancient epic lay  
Of war and Priam's woe.  
We watched the gladiators' play,  
And down the long white Appian Way  
We saw the legions go.

. . . . .

But we in vain 'mid sombre grays  
Dream of the golden Pagan Days.

E. R. MONTAGUE.



## SOLACE

WHEN Love is dead close gently both his eyes  
And with sweet flowers cover all his face,  
Let no embittered words nor witless sighs  
Disturb the stillness of his resting place.

When Love is dead, 'tis well that he should lie  
Where sun and rain may very quickly beat  
The gold from out his hair, and from his eye  
The last few tears that passion found so sweet.

When love is dead, go whisper to the wind  
And bid him kiss your pallid lips a space,  
Till on a day you pause amid the flowers, and find  
Love re-arisen from his resting place.

VERA NORTH.

## BEELEIGH ABBEY

1250—1913

THE still and gracious presence of such flowers  
As death leaves lovingly,  
In shaded aumbry, or by marble keep,  
The immortelles of antique hours,  
Broods ever here,  
Where all things sleep,  
With pale, thin ghosts of praising voices,  
Long vanished now,  
Through spirit veils,  
Heard climbing, climbing, spire-like, to the  
topmost spheres,  
To the far crystal shrine of light.  
One hears their tones drop softly,  
As evaporated tears,  
On listening mind, and sense,  
That strain, not wearily,  
To catch the whisper of their calm,  
But in the folded acquiescence of a mood,  
That feeling, breathing, seeing peace,  
Is spread like soothing waters on eternal shores,  
Where silver joys,  
In silence cannot cease.

HENRY SIMPSON.

TO ROBERT ROSS ON HIS GIFT OF  
A POSY OF THE FAVOURITE  
FLOWERS OF OSCAR WILDE

LAST night when all the sentient world was  
still,  
The message of your flowers mysterious crept  
Like perfume thro' my dreaming as I slept,  
And touched with zephyr hand my eyelids, till  
Strange visions seemed their veiled depths to fill.  
Of am'rous lilies swooning as they wept,  
Of passionate Irises by memories swept  
For One whose voice made all the garden thrill.

That garden desolate beneath the hill  
Of His life's sombre Calvary that left  
Sweet mourning Eros of his wings bereft,  
That hushed the rossignol's seductive trill,  
That Pan's melodious pipe relentless cleft,  
And robbed the fountain of its sparkling rill.

ANNA DE BRÉMONT.

## GALATEA

WITH songs of glory, deeds of praise,  
I tried your woman's heart to waken;  
You heard my many a glowing phrase  
And smiled, unshaken.

I told you tales of woman's beauty  
Tranced by the strength of woman's will;  
Tales of devotion and of duty;  
You listened—still.

I praised one woman's warm perfection  
In vain your jealousy to wake;  
Your eyes met mine with cold inspection;  
You nothing spake.

I tried your heart with sadder stories  
Of Pity's pains and life's mistakes;  
Of women's shames that should be glories  
For others' sakes.

At last I breathed my own despairing,  
My seeming hopes and dreams dismay'd,  
And then you turned, eyes not uncaring  
All unafraid;

For with the rose-red blush of morn  
O'er brow and bosom warmly breaking,  
My Galatea, newly born,  
Clung to me, waking.

GEO. BELL DOUGHTY.

## ANTINOÛS

(" . . . the Emperor Hadrian's beautiful favourite who drowned himself in the Nile in order that his spirit might become the protecting Genius of his patron.")

DAWN, clambering upon fainting stars  
Spreads a red banner in the sky,  
And the sad moon fades like a scar's  
Mark when the wound's pain is gone by.

The crimson river wafts a crown  
Of lotus flowers about his hair,  
Who dreamed that many waters drown  
The hungry thing that makes his lair

The living flesh. There comes not up  
A tremor from his weary lips.  
Pale to the sun, an empty cup  
Whence the last dreg of longing slips,

His face is. And the light gleams not  
Beneath the heavy lashes, wet  
With tears before the river got  
His body and the burning net

Woven about his joy. (He sought  
To leave his burden and to rest.)  
Bruised roses in the ripples caught  
His hands seem. Perfume from his breast

—Anointed with a jasmine oil—  
Sighs to chill breaths above the stream.  
(His too intolerable toil  
He stripped quite from him with his dream.)

White clouds by moonlight seem to trail  
And sway the long, soft, tender limbs;  
A radiance quenched in a clear veil  
A dead lamp whence sweet savour brims.

Thus died Antinoüs and shed  
The mantle marvellously made  
Like ivory patterned black and red  
Wherein his spirit was arrayed.

After in whispering night and cold  
A solitary way he trod,  
And Hadrian did not behold  
The soul of him he made a god.

KATHERINE MILLER.

## SONG-LIGHT

IS it the night that sends these shadows grey,  
Or do my own thoughts so bedim the day?  
Howe'er it be, your lips, dear heart, can wake  
The bliss that slumbers at the core of pain:  
Ah, let your voice—a happier morning—break  
Upon my night again!

If you but sing, the night will not be long,  
For I shall lose my sadness in your song;  
I shall forget that life is poor and bare,  
And rise beyond the present and the past  
Till, dreaming up from earth, without a care  
I am in heaven at last.

Sing! and I shall forget that it is night—  
Into my gloom your voice will bring the light,  
Or I shall know, if still the listening skies  
Be clouded and no stars look glimmering  
through,  
That heaven but turns away awhile its eyes  
To bend an ear to you.

A. ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

## THE CONQUERORS

*"Put up thy sword."*—N. T.

I SAW the Conquerors riding by  
With trampling feet of horse and men:  
Empire on empire like the tide  
Flooded the world and ebbd again ;

A thousand banners caught the sun,  
And cities smoked along the plain,  
And laden down with silk and gold  
And heaped-up pillage groaned the wain.

I saw the Conquerors riding by,  
Splashing through loathsome floods of war—  
The Crescent leaning o'er its hosts,  
And the barbaric scimitar,—

And continents of moving spears,  
And storms of arrows in the sky,  
And all the instruments sought out  
By cunning men that men may die!

I saw the Conquerors riding by  
With cruel lips and faces wan:  
Musing on kingdoms sacked and burned  
There rode the Mongol Ghengis Khan ;



And Alexander, like a god,  
Who sought to weld the world in one ;  
And Caesar with his laurel wreath ;  
And like a thing from hell the Hun ;

And, leading like a star the van,  
Heedless of upstretched arm and groan,  
Inscrutable Napoleon went  
Dreaming of Empire, and alone. . . .

Then all they perished from the earth  
As fleeting shadows from a glass,  
And, conquering down the centuries,  
Came Christ, the Swordless, on an ass !

HARRY KEMP.

#### IN LOW WATER.

PARDON me Goddess ! but ere love draw  
tight  
His noose round my galled neck, I'll take to  
flight:  
I had not feared your red lips, nor the charms  
Of lace snowed round your milk-white neck and  
arms,  
Did not insolvency, that frost on myrtles,  
Forbid we should pair off like sanctioned turtles.

F. W. TANCRED.

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL

SWEET Mary Maudlin, Robin, and John,  
Go, gather good store of holly and bay,  
For this is the eve of Christmas Day:  
Sing, *Parvule nos adjuva!*

Sweet Mary Maudlin, Robin, and John,  
Go, bring forth linen to smooth the bed,  
Where the Lord of Heaven may rest His  
Head:  
Sing, *Parvule nos adjuva!*

Sweet Mary Maudlin, Robin, and John,  
He comes not in glory the Angel told,  
Nor clad in raiment of purple and gold:  
Sing, *Parvule nos adjuva!*

Sweet Mary Maudlin, Robin, and John,  
He comes but a weakling Babe to lay  
His kingly head in a manger of hay  
Sing, *Parvule nos adjuva!*

Sweet Mary Maudlin, Robin, and John,  
Shall we lie soft—in a stable He,  
Who made great Heaven, and Earth, and Sea?  
Sing, *Parvule nos adjuva!*

Haste Mary Maudlin, Robin, and John,  
Go kindle the hearth and deck the hall  
For Him That comes to us Lord of all!  
Sing, *Parvule nos adjuva!*

SELWYN IMAGE.

### FRIENDSHIP

A FRIEND comes swiftly, like an answered  
prayer,  
That we had sought, with doubting lips in vain,  
Who when life's balance is weighed down by  
pain,  
Stands waiting near to lift the scale of care.  
The burden of its weight himself to bear.  
A love so self-effacing asks no gain,  
His joy is full, if only we attain,  
The best, the highest, that our souls may dare.

With cloudless thought, well his love understands  
Our inmost soul, to him we may confess,  
Our life's deep longings, or one brief distress.  
Let us come closer, firmly clasp those hands  
That are aflame with life, to heal and bless,  
And bind that friendship with immortal bands.

SYBIL AMHERST.



## THE BATH

### PART I

#### IN HER BED-CHAMBER

TO youth unconscious glad  
The world is a garden of dreams,  
The scent of a flower,  
Prism of delight—in bubbles blown,  
And youth is a damsel a-blush  
Slipping blythe from her bower,  
The world is a mirror  
For her, and sweet therein  
Is youth the maid ;  
In so joyous hour  
She hears no voice of passionate truth,  
Murmuring eons of pain,  
The wind and the earth rejoice  
And are fain,  
With youth the maid,  
To see the enmirrored amazes of love,  
With golden gleams entrinketed  
And jewelled light,  
In deeps of colour  
From some uncaptured element:  
Ah but to sea and sky it lends

A niggard gift,  
 With careless brush doth scant the violet,  
 Or pansy deep,  
 And o'er the rose but casts  
 The vermeil of a day ;  
 It lurks in crimson measure  
 Of the inspired and sun impressèd grape,  
 It glows a rich fire in the ruby,  
 In glooms and solemn deeps  
 It works a creamy miracle,  
 The Pearl.  
 But ah to youth the Maid !  
 Inseparate, untouchable,  
 Triumphant and supreme,  
 To her alone is captive  
 As it rests in beauteous eyes,  
 On cheek, and lips, and brow,  
 Within the twinklings of her sudden curls,  
 And on the flushèd mount,  
 That august citadel  
 Her ivory breast.  
 Ah youth is a blushing maid  
 So dazzling and firm ! yet a dream delitescent  
 Captured of spirit fine,  
 Flower of the rose determinate fire  
 Essence of Life Divine.  
 Ah youth the maid !  
 She knows no thirst of hearts that long  
 Nor of Passion the parching drouth,  
 'Neath balmy rain of innocence  
 She laves her ardent mouth  
 And turns her face like singing bird  
 To winds from West and South.

*There is no night for the innocent  
Only ray upon ray  
The hours follow on  
Shining gems a glimmering blent  
Arch'd of colour-beams  
Linked invisible heavenly bright  
As the rainbow gleams—  
No darkness breaks on the chain of light  
Dream upon golden dreams.*

Her virgin limbs in freedom moved  
'Neath coverlets of snow,  
Her wide blue eyes, the sun approved  
Uplifted to his glow.

She caught the world that first June morn  
In a cobweb net of glee,  
Her body a fragrant flower new born  
Her soul like a bud set free.

Her dawn-tipped fingers captured and held  
The sun-lit cloud of her hair,  
With a throb of song her bosom swelled  
Faintly englobed and fair.

She stepped and slipped from her gossamer  
web  
To the circle of moving light  
The wanton waves on rise and ebb  
Kissing her limbs, milk-white.

It ran by curves and cunning lines  
In drops reluctant hung,  
She laughed nor recked of crimson wines,  
Stealing her clefted tongue.

To catch the sparkling silver rain  
As it sprayed her virgin face,  
And water fell to rise again,  
In her joy with what grace!

*Shimmer of gold on a sunrise sky  
A lily torch of flame,  
Ardour of foam blowing suddenly—  
Where the sun to the waters came.*

*So at the brink of the world's desire  
With blind-fold eyes she stands,  
Immaculate feet at the edge of the fire,  
Golden rose in her heart to aspire,  
She smiles with empty hands.*

To youth unconscious glad  
The world is a shell in the hand,  
A song-bird tilting the fir-tree bough  
A wandering bird in a vale of blue,  
Oh! youth is a gayling lad  
And gun in hand,  
He stalks the buxom earth



His prey.  
With eyes as bright and clear  
As cloudless dawn,  
As hard as light  
No shadows near.  
He hears no goblin cry  
Of Passion or sin,  
But whistling down the wind in the surf,  
Or hilarious and fast  
With his galloping friend o'er the turf,  
Sees the world slipping past  
Underneath, and before him, "Full cry"  
Ah youth!  
He recks not that kisses lie furled  
On his smiling mouth—  
Un-sunned, un-warmed  
Like a crushed up rose  
In its green sheath curled—  
Contemptuous of maids or the round love-moon  
His heart lies cool  
And still and deep  
As a deep deep pool's  
Unruffled calm,  
And its silver throng  
That flash and dart,  
Are the laughter and song  
And glancing cheers,  
In the clean clear heart  
Of a gayling lad.  
Blind to beauty and love's desire,  
Swift for glory and enterprise,  
He mounts his steed with its nostrils of fire;  
Ah youth !

Takes his world in hand with curious eyes,  
Sets lips to apple—  
Or ripe or green—  
“For food,” quoth he, “the mouth is given  
And its teeth between.”

PART II  
IN THE WOOD

To woman ripe in loveliness  
The world is a city of joy,  
A kingdom of paramount love  
And she the queen.  
The world is a Paradise  
Of imminent adulation  
And she the worshipped of men ;  
On a throne of crystal and gold  
She leaneth low, and is languorous,  
With limbs of alabaster,  
Limbs out-couched  
To make a lap for treasure.  
Caskets of jade, and cedar wood  
Odorous with age,  
A nest  
For jewels, and trinkets engemmed ;  
Silken scarves writhen sensuously  
And flowers of charm,  
Boxes of perfume rare  
To enchant, and make drowse  
Of their incense.

Sweets for the palate,  
And philtres of love  
Like wine to entrance,  
Transpiring sweet fumes  
To enmist the mind.  
Books tooléd cunningly  
Wrapped in soft skins  
Of fragrant tans and bosséd in gold—  
All these for her eyes  
And her white hands to hold.  
Then heaped at her side—  
Gossamers soft and sinuous,  
Velvet pelts—  
Sandals diversely sewn,  
And hoods tricked out in beauty  
For times and seasons meant,  
Fretted crowns of gold with emeralds set  
And manifold precious gems,  
Ropings of pearls incalculable  
And diamonded chains that slip  
And flash through the fingers like water.  
And woman  
In glory of loveliness  
Strains to her mirror,  
Enchanted—intoxicate—consciously vain—  
Unconscious of evil.  
But passion is stirring  
And heating her red sweet blood  
To its daring.  
To woman with soul asleep  
Her world is a flattering delight  
With incense of admiration  
And beautiful striving men

Before her,  
Low on their knees,  
And hiding their faces.

*O holy-flower of purity  
O Lotus flower of dreams,  
Sweet youth come to maturity  
And all the earth it seems,  
Is throbbing out a voluntary,  
The voluntary of dreams;  
And Passion rouses lazily  
His popped sleeping head  
On innocence with gloomy eyes  
He looks from his rich bed,  
His aromatic breath is sweet  
Like the sun-warm flower of vine  
He pours libations at her feet  
Of laughing bubbling wine ;  
His web he weaves, and memory  
Is caught and covered there,  
And Innocence drinks deep of love  
Nor knows it for despair.*

Drowséd the pillared Sentinels of ancient wood  
A nightingale sang low—  
Deep in shade where sad owls brood  
Flowers and the earth were heavy with love  
By waters calm and slow.

Down green dim aisles the grey-winged dove  
Murmured her rich refrain,  
The sun shone hot in its dome above,  
Touching the stream like a sword of light  
And flashing back again.

Quick little forms went out of sight  
As the banner of noon unfurled.  
The air was stiller than midnight,  
The wings of the wind were folded down  
On their measureless rune of the world.

She languidly wove a lily-crown  
Under the arch of sleep,  
And dreaming gazed through mists that drown  
Youth's wandering thoughts on a summer day  
Where the after shadows creep.

A shade on lips and forehead lay  
Where love its fullness wrought,  
Her feet were set on woman's way  
And consciousness unsheathed wide  
Without the buds of thought.

The coronal blossoms at her side  
She lifted lovingly,  
Then for a mirror where waters glide,  
With asking eyes half full of sleep,  
She moved down warily.

Within the clear stream pure and deep  
Her own face dipped and smiled,  
She looked beyond where willows sweep--  
A shining gloom—an emerald shade  
Allured her and beguiled.

Timidly glancing the scented glade  
She slipped her garments white,  
Then held at poise, and half afraid,  
She trembling leant, like a milk-white doe  
Against the green cool light.

No sound was heard but the chanting low  
Of runnelling waters sweet,  
Like a dazzling nymph in an opal glow  
She cleft the pool whose opening wave  
Creamed to the touch of her feet.

To her lovely limbs the waters gave  
Till they bloomed enhollowéd.  
Like a guarded lily that ripples lave,  
On slender resolute arms upthrown,  
Floated her dainty head.

Again ! Again ! from a mossy stone  
She plunged her body fair,  
Then breathless at last on a sylvan throne  
She robed like a queen in her woodland bower  
And twisted her wandering hair.

Flushed like a Babe or a vivid flower,  
As the sun swept down the sky,  
She folded her lids at twilight hour,  
To slumber until the seeker came,  
When she waked to a trembling sigh.

She turned to love at the breath of a name  
Her feet were shod with fire,  
The gold rose burned with its quick white flame  
In her eager hands—as her mouth was kissed,  
And she met the world's desire.

*In all its pure entirety  
The flower of love is given  
A woman's life and liberty  
Her all—and sin unshriven.*

*A moment burning in the hand,  
The wind-flame of man's lust,  
A quick palmful of running sand  
To throw on air as dust.*

To man new-grown—at his full  
The world is a tide of life  
Flowing to East and West,  
To North and to South it flows,  
Bearing its freight of power and wealth,  
And man in his strength  
Is master and Lord.  
The tide of his world goes out  
And carrieth far,  
It lappeth the green fair isle  
'Neath the sun,  
It stormeth on rocks, and on cold grey crags  
In foam of anger and rue.  
Lo man on the tide of his world  
Goes down to its bitterest places,  
By fair or foul he moves  
In its cities,  
And he climbeth its mountains ;  
Low on the earth he creeps  
And secretly goes.  
He hunts and is ravenous,

Thirsting for blood,  
And for gold he crieth ;  
Yet made in the Image of God  
He vaunteth his Lordship,  
And ruleth the flood.  
And man all grown to his full  
Is ripe  
On the tides of his world,  
And woman in loveliness there  
A flower for his plucking.  
At mid-heat of day  
When man's at his resting,  
At sun-down,  
His strenuous labour ended,  
Or homing from hunting and slaying,  
At noon time  
Or idly betwixt the hours  
Of his feasting and drinking ;  
Ah then for a moment of moments  
He looseth the dragon  
The monster, his plaything  
From residences royal.  
O wondrous mighty mansions keepeth he,  
And clear pavilions of enmeshéd silk,  
'Mid wealth and magnificence,  
Airs sweet ambrosial,  
Soundings most musical,  
Laughter and low speech.  
Whisperings and song.—  
Frankincense, myrrh for oblations  
And Milk of the Spirit—  
With fires of the soul for his warmth.  
When jaded his appetite,



Prickings of spices beflowered  
And tenderest young things,  
Blossoms sweet scented to hold  
And fruit newly ripened.  
Lo! high-sounding names  
Hath this plaything,  
And sweet is his measure  
As softly he walks o'er the tides of the world  
On a silken cord  
At the wrist of the man.  
By the grace of his purpose,  
By gentle devisings,  
And mysteries of cunning,  
To the eyes of the woman  
An angel appeareth  
In place of the Beast,  
And sometimes a child.  
Or changeth at will  
To an innocent Song,  
Or a dulcimer fretted with silver strings  
For the ear of the woman.  
Or a goblet of winéd nepenthe,  
A Pearl of great price in her hand,  
Or a rose for her bosom.  
And ever and ever doth man  
On the tides of his world go down  
Taking his meaningless joy,  
As he passes  
To earnest of workings in life,  
The great mighty meanings,  
The purpose enormous,  
The wrestling with secrets  
Of nature and fate.

And ever again  
Man looseth at pleasure  
His toy  
The wild tameless dragon,  
Devourings of yesterday  
Man hath forgot on the morrow,  
As he mounts on the tides of his world,  
Leaving women and Babes in derision  
As things that are passing.  
Like sleeping or waking,  
Or eating or drinking,—  
He follows his strenuous labours,  
Man in the image of God  
The Lord and the Master.  
He hurries from East and to West  
From North and to South,  
On the tides of his world  
Everlasting.

### PART III

#### THE SEA

To woman bruised and virtueless  
The world is a desert of pain,  
And there she wandereth  
With gyves upon her wrists,  
And heavy chains about her bleeding feet  
Even like a fallen star, she hath no light  
And seeth none.

Weary she is  
But no rest cometh to that arid place  
No morning freshness and no twilight calms.  
Oh woman virtueless hath heart on fire  
Hath mind with all its sweet devices  
Swept by storm and stress  
To shapeless nothings  
And woman in her desert—wanders  
Waiting—watching—  
Till day is unto her as night,  
For like a brazen demi sphere  
Of heat intolerable is day  
And such inverted is the night  
Beneath whose burning shade purpureal  
Sleepless woman shorn of virtue  
Lieth prone,  
And great her bitter wonder—there alone  
That never cometh any man to her,  
Yet down the arched infinitudes  
As in a dream  
From her lost world the echoes beat  
Of voices,—singing—feasting  
And of laughter.  
Of the splash of fountain waters  
Silver tinkling,  
Or of music pulsing—dancing  
As man feasteth with his kind.  
Taking lightly—open-handed  
Sweets of virtue from the woman  
Laughing taken—laughing given—  
Even to-day as yesterday  
Beneath the sun,  
The least of all Life's accents

In man's rythm—  
As a wave breaks on the shore—  
As one sunrise to another—  
As one sun behind its hill—  
Fadeth—fadeth like its fellows  
Unremembered 'mid his reckonings,  
So is woman to a man,  
And from his mind  
Fast fades her shining interval  
When service done  
She slips into her desert cast away.  
Oh further further are the echoes  
To her ears,  
As man moveth on his world-tide  
Full of greatness,  
In his works and in his purpose ;  
And woman marvels virtueless  
Expectant waiting vainly in her desert,  
Then at last one comes to her  
With shivering whisper  
Like a chilly breath it speaks:  
"O woman ripe in loveliness  
"Thy world was a city of dreams  
"Come back with me  
"And find its wonders once again  
"And all its glories—Come with me  
"Where innocence is hiding  
"In thy long lost garden of joy."  
And woman yearned,  
But strange the voice,  
A faintling sigh it was,  
That coldly blew  
And ached like North Wind through a lifeless tree,

Then felt she even as a mourner feels  
 That decks with fresh fair flowers  
 A last year's grave  
 And knows the ghost of sorrow by his side:  
 "I cannot come," said woman,  
 Gyvéd on her wrists,  
 With chains about her feet—  
 The faint voice faintly cried  
 And fainter ere it died:—  
 "I am thy virginal desire  
 "I come from fields of death."  
 Thereafter woman listeneth and another comes  
 The voice is vibrant and it mocking cries:  
 "Thou fool  
 "Why sittest thou within the desert  
 "Chained and like a curséd Beast  
 "Forsaken—blind—athirst,  
 "Alone and hungering?  
 "Thou weepest for lost Virtue  
 "And desire of Virgin hearts—  
 "A milky poison futile—sweet to taste  
 "And pure in seeming 'innocence' is called  
 "And lacking wisdom  
 "All that drink thereof  
 "Are blind and foolish  
 "Falling by the way o'er precipice  
 "In rushing floods,  
 "Or, caught of boiling whirlpools swept away  
 "Their white flowers feebly clutched  
 "And withered in frail hands,  
 "Or maimed and useless  
 "Broken on some mighty wheel,  
 "These weaklings flee into the desert.

" Oh thou fool turn now to me  
 " I am the great Desire, the luscious fruit,  
 " The wine of purple  
 " And of amber spirit—strength.  
 " I am Desire with knowledge  
 " Child of laughing wisdom  
 " Wed to pleasurable sin;  
 " I hold the shining staff  
 " Betwixt my hands discreet,  
 " Of shameless courage;  
 " A flaming twin my feet  
 " With sandals thonged of brass  
 " No tracks can wound, nor flinty ways unfit;  
 " I am Desire of life and joy  
 " Oh come with me  
 " Raise now thy tear-dimmed eyes  
 " They shall be bright  
 " Thy pale lips crimson  
 " And thy starv'd body  
 " Satisfied with all the sweets of earth—  
 " That woeful garb thrown off for robes of state  
 " This shapeless darkness changed for brilliance  
     deep  
 " Of long world summer,  
 " Foolish woman  
 " Thou self immolate come with me—fear not  
 " No pangs of memory may assail—  
 " Stoop to my cupp'd palm  
 " And drink the scented waters  
 " Of forgetfulness."  
 And woman in her desert  
 Listeneth, wondering still  
 When yet another voice!

O small it is and like a silver flute,  
 So passing sweet it thrilled through all the deeps  
 And something moved within the woman's soul  
 Like the first tremble  
 Of a Babe beneath the heart  
 When hope like rare fire darts  
 Through all a mother's being—  
 And woman in her desert heard  
 A sound of living waters  
 And the stir of young and growing things:  
 "O lonely one far in thy desert,"  
 Saith the voice,  
 "I am the Mighty Love the blessed child  
 "Of Penitence and Prayer,  
 "I bear the shining crown of Sacrifice  
 "My hands like chrisméd Lilies  
 "Hold the Dew of God's own Grace,  
 "I ask thee not to come  
 "But suffer me to stay with thee,  
 "For lo Desire the Virgin being dead—  
 "And Innocence her handmaid slain—  
 "The voice thou heardest was a wraith—  
 "Thou canst not follow to the land of Shades  
 "And find the garden of thy youth again.  
 "O woman give not ear  
 "Unto that other one  
 "Whose scorn of laughter breaks between us  
     now—  
 "It is the voice of bartered Conscience  
 "Wearing cloak of borrowed happiness,  
 "Such cometh from the Dead Seas  
 "Bearing fruits with cankered hearts,  
 "And wine of glory

“Tinctured with wormwood bitterness;  
“The offered robes are wove of tinsel,  
“And the bloom for paléd lips  
“Is colour false, that burns like vitriol  
“And hardens softling smiles  
“The brightness for thy weary eyes  
“A poisonous touch!  
“That jaundices the Vision  
“Unto cruel looks,  
“And glitter, lustreless of pride.  
“O woman let me live with thee  
“And wander evermore,  
“Then all these wide wild wastes  
“Shall flower unfadingly  
“The Peace of gentle waters shall be thine  
“Thou shalt not thirst nor hunger  
“And thy shame shall die.”  
Then woman in the Desert virtueless  
Between the voices waiteth waveringly.

*Choose thou the way—there is no guide  
No light no track of gold,  
No Beacon o'er the labyrinth wide  
To wanderers from the fold.*

*Love was thy guerdon, Love thy staff,  
Love took thee by the hand—  
And left thee with a light light laugh  
Alone in a strange land.*



*In that vast place of mystery,  
From which is no return—  
Thou wait with eyes that cannot see  
And halting feet that burn.*

Dark shadows sweeping o'er the foam wet sand,  
From purple masses driven,  
Of clouds low-hanging over sea and land  
The watery sun hath riven.

Whistling the last notes of a hurricane,  
In gusts a clean wind shrilleth out,  
The harassed storm wrack heaped and chased  
again,  
In packs unpile and thrown about.

Like instant run-aways within the grip,  
Great breakers foam and churn,  
Brought to submission 'neath a mighty whip,  
At thundrous gallop, stop and turn.

And swiftly running o'er the glistening space  
Body enwrappéd—flying hair—  
A figure lithe of strong pursuant grace,  
Whose slim long limbs and feet are bare.

One moment in the desolation wide  
Of all that cold forsaken shore  
She stands, her gaze upon the angry tide;  
Uncloaked, her massive hair she upbore.

Like some heroic figure watching fate,  
That fearfully would draw and hold—  
And clutching cruel, would her annihilate—  
She faced the blackening waters cold.

Then plunged into the angry surf and spray,  
Battled, with head erect, and feet  
Archéd at perfect poise, without dismay,  
Her arms shot spear-like, dived to meet

The mountainous mass, oncoming, ere it broke,  
Then rose, as in its element  
A swift sea-bird might rise, with stroke on stroke  
Swimming at ease magnificent.

Breasting the mighty ocean that roughly laved  
Her tired mouth, she moved with strength,  
Her soul tumultuous in her eyes, she braved  
The darkling waters length on length.

Warring within, without, alone! alone!  
While western sky in purple bloomed,  
Flame-flower of sun bursting at last full-blown  
From golden-hearted splendour storm en-  
tombéd—  
And low the havocking wind at death made  
moan,  
And clouds no more at hazard spoomed.

With even stroke she buffeted her way  
Deep breathing, and within her eyes,  
Light, as of meeting rapiers at play,  
When deadly purpose 'twixt them flies.

Lo, 'twere a simple thing, to cease and fall  
Down through the cleaving waters deep—  
And ivory body washéd free of all  
Pollution, in teeming waters steep,  
Fill ears like toneless shells with storings small ;

So 'twere a cooléd blessing, for the red  
Ripe lips to mouth on dank sea-weed,  
The round voluptuous limbs, from passion freed,  
To stretch at ease on coral bed.

Yet blood in vessel is hot, expostulate  
Of seething youth, flesh white and firm  
In love with dear possession of self and hate  
With curling lips forswearing the infirm  
Weak voicéd soul ; or offer deadly opiate  
Of spirits that unrestraint confirm.

In ever changing symmetry of form,  
With mastering lusty limbs, she clove  
Through heavy abiding swell of dying storm,  
In grim deep eyed resolve she strove.

Then turned to perilous verge again at last,  
And overthwart the rolling breakers rode,  
Like some fair ship upon the crest, and cast  
Herself as waters inward flowed.

Warfare within, without, the battle o'er,  
Complained the mighty ocean haltingly,  
And clouds like flocks of sheep at set of sun  
Masséd together drowsily.

Sobbing with hard won breaths she slipped and  
threw  
Her dripping garments, flashéd white

One naked moment, gold—like vision new  
Of Aphrodite pure as light.  
Around her, sweeping, floating, sea-gulls flew  
And cried, no human soul in sight.

Like draped statue long she stood, while rays  
Of sun grown pale, made dying track  
Across the sea. Her thought at parting ways  
Was set, nor any turning back;

Upon her forehead mockingly the touch  
Of sure time lay, her drooping mouth  
Fell to faint witherings, traced of thirst. Oh such  
As curl the failing lilies after drouth;

The sombre darkness fallen within her eyes  
Enduring shadow of the pain,  
When shrined fire in last pale flicker dies  
And never may be lit again.

O blessed rose, the burning flower of gold,  
When Death is doubt and Life is all,  
Even hot and quick the eager hands that hold—  
And passionate siren senses call,  
Desire knoweth not the quenched flame is cold,  
The looséd petals wait to fall.

So, like a statue, still in thought she stayed,  
As she to that lone place were wed.  
Like any child or sweet unravished maid  
The glory of her golden head  
That bowed, as 'twere to a voice obeyed,  
One waited, unto him she sped.

*O flower of fire  
When flame is running pale  
And perfume's arrogant  
Who shall persuade distilled scent  
From Love's inhalings  
And out-breathings,  
Long lost, relent,  
Caught up on vanished airs  
To gather all its redolence  
And steal back to aspire anew,  
Who to the culminating heart's core  
Shall prevail on wandering waves  
Of far spent golden heat  
To find the cooled essence  
Of an ancient glow,  
And re-incarnate warmth  
Of the essential heat,  
Pulsate the perfect circle once again  
Induce the wondrous birth  
Spontaneous, Travail free?*

To man on his summit  
The world is a Victory Field,  
And high on his ultimate altitude  
He vieweth the world,  
And like some crested war horse  
Stampeth pride.

Kingly-wise complacent,  
Scarred and eagle-eyed,  
Man resteth,  
And never a trace  
Of the gayling lad  
On his sphinx-like face,  
Pencilled by fingers of time,  
Rough-hewn by experience,  
Serious and keen,  
By his honour and logic impressed  
And his majesty.

From making of laws  
For his kind,  
And dispensing the law,  
From fighting the foe  
And redeeming his land,  
From building of bridges, and ships,  
And mightiest fastness  
By land and by sea,  
From wrenching of gold  
Out of bowels of the earth  
From his friend or his foe,  
From telling of secrets  
And finding,  
From uncounted labours  
Of myriad degrees,  
From manifold preachings,  
Deep-hearted advisings,  
From wisdom's own teachings,  
Man resteth.  
And there by his side  
His untaméd plaything

No longer rich pampered  
But ready to fondle  
By hand absent minded.

O man on his summit,  
With heel on his world  
Of abject machinery,  
Man-moulded, man-made,  
Force-captured of nature  
Within and without,  
He regardeth in pride  
The work of his hand,  
His whole mighty scheme and his plan.  
Then meteth he justice  
In courts of all wonder,  
Conglomerate orderly,  
Grave courts and seemly of specialised language,  
And ritual confirmative,  
Intricate law,  
Separate, absolute justice from morals.  
To woman in her desert  
Wondering,  
No answer comes from man  
In all his greatness  
To her riddle,  
Unknowledgeable she  
Uncontemplate of man,  
Engrossed with mighty workings,  
Occasionally he  
Turns absently idle  
To greet his most constant companion,  
So man on his summit  
Rests gravely and grandly  
Congratulate.

## PART IV

### THE HOUSE

To woman prostitute,  
The world is a forest of ghouls.  
Like spectres they pass and repass  
And creep through the night,  
Devouring the dead.  
Their blood is a cold  
Running stream of pollution.  
Like gaunt stricken trees,  
When a wind-driven fire  
Hath consuméd their verdure  
They seem  
Enrooted yet bare of all graces,  
The green hope of Spring time  
Forgotten.  
Discordantly creaking  
They sweep not in rhythm,  
Nor bend to the breeze ;  
No fruitage or blossom  
Them bourgeon around,  
Not even the wild weeds  
In careless life cover  
The black charréd ground.  
The beautiful music  
Of life in their leafiness,  
All the sweets hidden  
Of colour and sound,  
With song birds that nested  
Their shadings among,



Have left them for ever  
Alone with the silence.  
Indifferent are these,  
To pulse-beat of summer  
Full-passioned of love,  
To still-hearted snows,  
To wind shrilly mocking  
Or fast falling rain,  
The frost air that shivers,  
The keen desolation  
Falls o'er them in vain.  
And woman Prostitute,  
Through winding mazes led by Pain  
Maskéd as rich delight,  
Is brought into the company  
The vultures of the night.  
Sponsors and mothers they,  
Whose fould talons  
Reach with rank adoption covetously;  
And merry Pilot  
Droppeth his brave old mask  
And stares  
With writhen face abhorringly,  
And woman,  
She even she,  
Her face in perjured hands,  
Moves piteously  
Among the Host,  
With anguished feet  
That last frail barrier have crossed,  
To city of retribution,  
'Midst its putrid alleys lost.  
Ah stealthily they move

This furtive Host,  
Decaying not dying,  
Like creatures of darkness  
Shunning the light,  
They creep in the byways  
Or hide in their lairs,  
Until the day darkens,  
When clad in last trappings  
With courage of sin,  
They stalk through the city,  
Disguised in cunning devices  
To cover the wreckage within;  
In thieving strong fingers  
They eagerly clutch  
The gold they are seeking,  
And nightly they feast  
On the dead souls of men,  
Lo lust is their help-meet,  
And appetites many,  
Their servants unclean.  
Ah left with the far dawn,  
The clear morning smiles,  
And with the lost noontide  
The blushes once mantling  
Like bloom on a peach.  
Corrupted—translated—  
Where evil paint gleameth,  
And thirstings unquenchable  
Unassuaged hunger,  
Dread merciless cravings,  
Their last earthly reckonings,  
Of suffering and pain,  
**Obliquely lascivious**

Man-loathéd—man-wanted,  
They ask not for pity  
Nor give it again.

And woman prostitute  
Hath eyes no tears can dim.  
Her laughter sounds  
As cruel derision might laugh  
When wedded to Despair.

*When lightning plays across the abysmal sky  
And on the instant tiniest leaf's in view,  
Ah even so across the Soul's black night  
The flash revealeth little flowers that push  
Through murky swamps, and tremble suddenly,  
And o'er the mighty storm-wrecked space, in vast  
Of silence deep, is heard the small still voice at last.*

Silent the stately house ; the torpid air  
Stirred not ; wine-laden revellers deeply slept—  
Only an ancient clock ticked mournfully on the  
    stair,  
Whose polished surface, silken robes had  
    swept.

One hour, and children of the dawn must run  
To draw the storm-soaked curtains from a sky,  
Where flashing aftermath endorsed the sun,  
One little hour ere day came suddenly.

Strait as a shadow in the stifling room  
She stood—a golden lantern, dimly cast  
Its rose gleams o'er a space of scented gloom,  
An alcoved bed, within its chamber vast.

In sated slumbering, one other lay,  
And curious as her own cold wraith might look,  
Him she regarded in a new found way,  
As one would read some long forgotten book.

When end hath come of stresses dark and wild,  
That yet abide in nightmare vision of sleep,  
One wakes at dawn even as a little child  
With clean clear eyes that have no thought  
to weep.

The world is changed and old familiar things  
Are garbéd fresh, like new, and strange, and  
sweet,  
Even so might slaves—whose rescue freedom  
brings  
From wicked duties vile—each other greet.

So gazéd she, her perdurous breath held still,  
Piercing the darkness with her soul's new eyes,  
Felt all the ecstatic scorn in triumph fill  
Her Being, then crept away with dear surprise.

Down corridors of garnered wealth she sped  
Into the great Hall of Inheritance,  
Where prideful pictured faces of the dead  
Looked down, a faint touch in their arrogance  
Her seemed, of grim approval as she fled  
Through ghostly growing light of day's  
advance.

Swiftly she moved and broidered hangings drew  
From Eastward window with her jewelled  
hand,  
A faintling breeze, storm-prové, freshly blew  
And scent of warm wet flowers to ardour fanned.

With tread as light as any woodland faun  
She moved across the stonied Terrace floor,  
To amaze of youth, rose tinted, unto Dawn  
Her yearning soul leaned out untried once more.

The leaden cloak plague-spotted from her fell,  
And purified erect, like some white fire  
That flameth free of smouldering filth, from Hell  
Her escaping spirit broke, rose high and higher.

Lo suddenly upon her painted face  
Shone out the glory of the speeding hour,  
Transcending high with compensating grace  
The marred perfection of that spoiled flower.

Ah! yet to see the grey veil rise again,  
O'er hidden mysteries of pure desire!  
Hear choir divine swell out in rapturous pain  
To hymn the gradual vision of pearléd fire.

See dim mist float o'er amber vistaed lake,  
With faith transfigured, watch the opal cloud  
O'er sea-green fields of heaven, its banners shake,  
With dust of gold the waiting earth enshroud.

Slowly she turned ere yet the glory spent,  
To mock possessions in richéd hall and room,  
Aloof exultant, rapidly she went,  
Passing to light subdued a marble gloom.

The water's healing sound played musically—  
And greening wavelets rose against the cool  
White steps, where colour shades uncertainly  
Criss-crosséd there, and o'er the deepening  
pool.

She slipped her robe's immodest daintiness,  
Her gorgeous rings and jewelled devices  
heaped,  
Then all her cunningly anointed nakedness,  
Her painted lures, in water laved and steeped.

Lo! 'Twere a simple thing to follow truth,  
When it revealed stands beckoning,  
Even through death's arches follow, leaving ruth  
That holds, and unto God the reckoning.

Lo 'twere a justful thing to sink and sleep  
With waters lightly lapping overwise,  
Ten stars not one o'er cruse of Spikenard keep  
Heaven's guard, and God prevents all weeping  
eyes.

*O little, little soul, too small,  
Too weak, for ordering such gross dwelling.  
Lord dost Thou wonder when Thy child forsakes,  
And comes back to Thee telling,  
How hard it was  
And how the fall  
At end of all?*

*The souls of rich and great  
Whose flesh is mere encumbrance,  
How may they guess,  
The crushing weight  
The heavy stress ?  
Ah, they may hear the laugh of God  
Too late,  
Who judge the race already run—  
His voice may say  
“ Were ye the Stewards of all Fate  
“ If race begun  
“ Tell ?  
“ Or which hath won—  
“ Hold recompense and pay ?  
“ Nay.”*

*O Death so still, so all prevailing,  
Pervaded Body careth not,  
Save for its Rest compelling.  
He holds the scale for good or ill  
He smiles at scorn and railing.*

To man when his sowing is over,  
His reaping well done,  
The world is a Hollow of rest,  
Convention strait his God,  
Respectability his crest.  
And sitting by his side  
His trusty friend, the whilom Dragon wild

Brought to subjection as a harmless pet,  
So sleek, and fat, and dull, his dangerous fangs  
Fallen from his loose old mouth,  
In place of honour set.  
Unction of grace for him  
Whose duties manifold  
Unto his master's will  
Crown him peculiar value, for behold  
This beast magnificent,  
Perjuring his native vow,  
Unto domestic yoke doth meekly bow,  
The while his lord  
With academic white complacent hands,  
Lifteth upon his own great brow  
The coronet of virtue,  
And on his worn out servant,  
Sores anointed, hidden sweet,  
He places sternly masterful  
His righteous feet.  
Ah, 'twere of strange and wonderful  
Not to be fathomed of the feebler mind,  
The code mysterious  
Involved yet so complete,  
By which man resting from his world-wide  
schemes  
With serious mind at last  
Regardeth woman meet  
To wear the inferior crown.  
And take a charge discreet,  
Perfect the circle of his purpose great,  
Hold in her child-like woman-hands the reins,  
With untried soul the sacred family  
Inform, with modest consciousness



Of honour high conferred,  
Listen, in pure humility,  
To periods wise, and garnered lore,  
From man the arbiter of state and race.  
So down into the garden  
Of God's perfect flowers,  
With contemplative self sufficiency,  
Man moveth to his choice,  
To pluck from sanctity  
Of maidenhood repose,  
The daisy white, or lily high, or pinkéd rose,  
Process the pomp of incensed ceremony  
With condescending worship's grace.  
So man as teacher armed in might,  
Inherited accomplishment,  
Of wifhood telleth, and of heavenly right,  
As low in adoration woman kneels.  
O pure and sweet must mothers walk  
Their narrow way,  
Their special charge to cherish and defend  
The hallowed name in gift,  
Nor mire it by frail steps that trip.  
Nourish and bear  
And bearing, cleanse the offspring for the state  
With water of life,  
Should from the tamed "affection" fall  
Excuséd warrant of his age—  
A breath of poison,  
As he a fawning threshold welcome gives  
With decency bedight.  
"Behold," to woman saith the man  
"The perfecting of law:  
"Honour the household head

" And Church that teacheth it,  
 " Christ the foundation laid,  
 " But man superior  
 " Unto his needs remade ;—  
 " Honour the real estate,  
 " And guard all consciences in fear of tongues,  
 " Not by the inward need ;  
 " With shocked expediency  
 " Cover the truth on body and soul  
 " Of all deforméd nakedness,  
 " In honourable apparel rich,  
 " Or garb of poor simplicity,  
 " Honour convention too  
 " Which holds the scales of sin,  
 " If lost God's Love thereby  
 " Man's approbation win.  
 " Honour the covert act,  
 " Offence is not where no man seeth it.  
 " Honour the mighty un-earned gold,  
 " For chance wears now the Halo of God.  
 " Pay him the farthing uttermost  
 " Or perish out of sight.  
 " Touch all the virtues of thy friend, him test,  
 " He will not fail  
 " So thou not touch his gold.  
 " Honour the virtue washéd white,  
 " Or virtue bought and sold ;  
 " So be it the mart thou goest to  
 " Be consecrate with golden circle around,  
 " Or closed of key, the open mart abhor,  
 " And all who walk therein.  
 " Honour discretion for she is the queen  
 " And holds exemption's royal prerogative,

“ To turn unlistening ear unto the ancient tablets  
“ From Mount Sinai told.  
“ She wields a sceptre wrought of wisdom cool,  
“ A rod of chastisement is hers  
“ For punishment, and mark, the only sinner he  
“ Who but commits the clumsy sin;  
“ And honour chastity,  
“ Draw close the robes  
“ On whose white surface  
“ Never smirch must fall,  
“ Shudder from shaméd chastity,  
“ Yet may thou use it as a pall  
“ To cover man’s dead purity,  
“ Yet may’st thou burn its incense at the shrine  
    of lust,  
“ Even as a blesséd ointment for the wounds  
    corrupt  
“ Lo chastity is just,  
“ And man the strict custodian thereof  
“ Condemneth infinitesimal canker-fly,  
“ Condemneth spot of dust.  
“ And last and greatest honour charity,  
“ Nay—honour pity and ruth that hath no trust,  
“ Or fine contempt that doleth patronage,  
“ Or Mammon’s fond pretence  
“ That kneels to fame,  
“ Thus through the ages man to woman teacheth  
    law.”

*But deep in the ocean  
Abroad in the firmament,  
In clean rain that falleth,*

*In woods and in forests,  
In glitter of stars ;  
In the full moon's complacency of light  
In the purple recesses of sky  
By rivers and mountains  
In soft mantling snow-flakes  
That gently float by,  
'Mid flowers of the hedges,  
Or sun gold that floweth  
A fluid of wonder  
All covering, out drawing  
In warmth parturitive,  
Caressing the fruits to their ripeness,  
The blooms to their beauty,  
In rhythmical blending  
Of colour and scent,  
In all the world splendour  
Of passionate coherence,  
And deep breathed perfection,  
Out-ebbing—iu-rushing—  
In lightning and thunder,  
In winds four-fold music,  
O'er wide ocean marvel,  
In the rapture abiding  
Of God's glorious earth,  
Ah, never subsiding  
Clear laughter is running,  
The laughter of Pan ?  
Eternal unstopping—  
Or mocking or tearful,  
O sweet running laughter*

*Its ripples unceasing  
At all this great structure,  
Inverted confuséd,  
Marred out of God's plan,  
Inextricably twisted  
So hopelessly netted,  
And blindly there seated,  
Futilities King,  
Self-worshipped, self-satisfied Man.*

MARGARET SCOTT THOMSON.

The Poets' Club Gold Medal for 1911  
was awarded to Mrs. Thomson for this  
poem. The judge was Mr. Ernest Rhys.



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